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War Can Be Lost On Home Front, Sen. Dodd Says

BY WILLARD EDWARDS
(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Washington, June 10 — Sen. Thomas J. Dodd [D., Conn.] told the Senate today that the spreading war in Viet Nam might be lost, not on the field of battle, but on the home front.

His slashing attack on what he called "a noisy minority of defeatists and appeasers" obviously included some Democratic senators and led to violent reactions on the floor.

"These are the carefully documented views of the Pentagon, Gen. [Maxwell D.] Taylor and the Bundy brothers," said Sen. Joseph S. Clark [D., Pa.]. "I am in profound disagreement."

Speaking for Johnson

Clark brought into the open what everyone knew — that Dodd was acting as spokesman for President Johnson. The President's advisers on Viet Nam policy are Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, his assistant for national security affairs, William Bundy, assistant secretary of state for far eastern affairs, and Taylor, United States ambassador to Viet Nam.

Senators Mike Mansfield [D., Mont.], the majority leader, and Wayne Morse [D., Ore.] also attacked Dodd's exhaustive, 30,000 word discourse on the Asian war. Mansfield and others were incensed about Dodd's charge that some American press coverage of the conflict had been distorted, thus contributing to misunderstanding and confusion at home.

The press, Mansfield said, is doing a good job.

"Major War Brewing"

On one point, all the speakers were agreed—that a major war is brewing in Viet Nam. Dodd, recently returned from a tour of the battle area, predicted many costly battles in the coming months.

"The chances are that American casualties will run much heavier than they have since large scale fighting first erupted in Viet Nam in 1961," he said. "If the Communists score some initial victories in this offensive, this should be no reason for despair."

"Let us not lose heart if the coming weeks bring some bitter news. The commitment we have made in Viet Nam is irrevocable; the strength we are building there is invincible. I am certain that the Vietnamese people will ultimately prevail over the communist aggressors and that the Communists will be obliged to sue for peace as they did in Korea."

"Confidence Undermined"

But his confidence in ultimate victory was undermined, Dodd said, by the operations of "a noisy minority . . . probably less than 10 per cent of the population" who are clamoring for withdrawal from Viet Nam, no matter what the consequences.

This group, he said, included members of Congress, Communists, fellow travelers, extremist liberals, pacifists and confused humanitarians. Their incessant clamor for appeasement, he asserted, misleads African and Asian ambassadors into believing that President Johnson will retreat in the face of public opinion hostile to his policies.

Even more damaging, Dodd asserted, was the effect of the appeasement cries on leaders in Hanoi, Peiping, and Moscow where the North Vietnamese, Red Chinese, and Russians have become convinced that American public opinion will compel the President to withdraw from Viet Nam.

Believe Three Are Target

Dodd mentioned no senator by name but his remarks appeared to be aimed at Mansfield, Clark, and Morse, plus some other Democrats who have voiced misgivings about the administration's foreign policy. They included Chairman J. W. Fulbright [Ark.] of the Senate foreign relations committee, and Senators Albert Gore [Tenn.], Ernest Gruening [Alaska], Frank Church [Idaho], George McGovern [S. D.], Robert Kennedy [N. Y.] and Gaylord Nelson [Wis.].

In charging that "there has been something seriously wrong with the handling of the war," Dodd said he

found "the overwhelming majority of American correspondents in Viet Nam to be competent and conscientious reporters" but that "taken in its totality," the picture of the situation in Viet Nam was sometimes inaccurate, sometimes imbalanced, sometimes grossly inadequate.

"Atrocities Played Up"

He complained, for example, that atrocities by South Vietnamese troops were played up while atrocities by the Viet Cong [communist] guerrillas were not similarly emphasized.

Dodd did not identify any American newspaper which had distorted the news from Viet Nam but he singled out a big eastern newspaper for allegedly exaggerating the opposition to American policy in Asia by playing up "the clamor of a tiny minority."

Some correspondents in Viet Nam, he remarked, have achieved "a remarkable degree of balance" in their reports but they are in a minority. One reason for inadequate coverage, he said, was hostility between the press corps in Saigon and the United States information agency which has become "a scandal of the first magnitude."

Urges Bipartisan Study
Dodd urged a bipartisan study of the handling of the war, saying he

which, Dodd said, is responsible for opposition to administration policy, he called for appointment by the Senate foreign relations committee of a bipartisan fact-finding mission to make an on-the-spot study of the situation in Viet Nam and to report back.

Dodd also invited critics such as Walter Lippmann, the columnist, and Prof. Hans Morgenthau of the university of Chicago, to visit Viet Nam so that they could "better weigh the human and political consequences of withdrawal."

On the basis of talks with virtually all far eastern leaders, Dodd said, he can assure the Senate that all are solidly behind American policy in Viet Nam.

In Korea, Dodd concluded, a decisive defeat was inflicted on communist aggression. The solution there, altho far from ideal, has held fast for some 13 years, he said.

"If we can inflict a similar defeat on communist aggression in southeast Asia," he said, "if we can purchase a pause of 10 or 15 or 20 years in this area, then there is at least reason to hope that the extremists in Moscow and Peiping will be discredited and more moderate elements take their place. Short of accepting total defeat, there is no alternative."

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